The Traveller Action Group (TAG) meets every three months to share information on support services for Travellers and to make sure these services are suitable to meet Traveller needs and that to ensure Travellers are aware of their existence and how to access them.

The Traveller Action Group is chaired by the Assistant Director of Promoting Wellbeing, Southern Health and Social Care Trust and there is representation from:

- Other Southern Health and Social Care Trust staff
- Local Traveller Support Groups
- Early Years Toybox
- Housing Executive
- Traveller Education Support Service (TESS)
- Public Health Agency
- Local Council

The Traveller Action Group was established in 2010. Travellers attended these meetings for a number of years. However more recently, while there has been no direct Traveller involvement, Traveller Support workers feedback to Travellers on the progress being made by the group and bring issues from the Travellers they work with to the meetings for discussion.

What work was the Traveller Action Group involved in during 2016/2017?

We implemented our action plan under 8 key areas:-

- Improved Inter-sectoral working under Community Planning
- Early years support and Educational attainment
- Employment and Skills
- Reducing stigma
- Traveller friendly HSC services
- Targeted programmes
- Monitoring Evaluation and Research
- Collaboration and joint working
We implemented our action plan…..

1. **Improved Inter-sectoral working under Community Planning**

*Local Councils* are now represented on the Traveller Action Group and all member organisations have been involved in the development of the new Community Plans which can be downloaded from the relevant Council website.

**Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Council (ABC)**
is the second largest council in Northern Ireland. The Council took responsibility for the services of three former Councils – Armagh City and District Council, Banbridge District Council and Craigavon Borough Council. ABC Council has a population of 200,000+ and covers an area of 554 square miles. There are seven District Electoral Areas and 41 Wards. ABC Council employs 1,195 staff and £50 million +.

Further information is available [@http://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk](http://www.armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk/)

**Newry, Mourne and Down District Council (NMD)**, is made up of the former Newry & Mourne and Down District Council areas. It also includes the Ballyward electoral area which previously sat within the Banbridge District Council authority. With a population of around 171,500 and a coastline of 100miles, it is the third largest council area in Northern Ireland spanning from Crossmaglen in South Armagh to Saintfield in South Down. There are seven District Electoral Areas: Crotleive, Downpatrick, Newry, Rowallane, The Mournes, Slieve Croob and Slieve Guilion.

NMD Council has established a Traveller Forum which meets monthly. A Traveller Needs Assessment has been completed and will be made available on the Council website @ [http://www.newrymournedown.org/your_new_council_online](http://www.newrymournedown.org/your_new_council_online)

Further information is available from [justyna.mccabe@nmandd.org](mailto:justyna.mccabe@nmandd.org)

**Straddling two counties and stretching from Swatragh in the north to Fivemiletown in the south, the Mid Ulster District Council** covers an area of 660 square miles with a population of more than 140,000. The Council took responsibility for the services of three former Councils – Cookstown District Council, Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council and Magherafelt District Council – as well as a range of new services on 1 April 2015. Forty councillors are elected in seven District electoral areas.

Further information is available [@http://www.midulstercouncil.org/Council](http://www.midulstercouncil.org/Council)
1. **Improved Inter-sectoral working under Community Planning**

The accommodation needs of Travellers in Northern Ireland remains a priority for the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). NIHE continues to:

- work with all stakeholders towards the provision of suitable Traveller accommodation
- identify options for accommodation and site provision, and
- ensure standards of provision meet the needs of Travellers

Recent research indicates a preference for a more permanent accommodation in a fixed location. Discussions continue with a wide range of inter-agency partnerships in an attempt to identify potential options to address this preference. Across its existing sites, NIHE continue to explore:

- development options; and
- the most appropriate way to deliver these aspirations

At a more local level NIHE is in the process of appointing a consultant with the view to changing the current status of the temporary site at Legahory Close to a permanent provision. This would involve:- extending the site, works to the infrastructure where required, renewal of existing pods and applying to the Planning Authorities for a permanent site. Should planning approval not be granted NIHE has full planning approval for a **12 unit serviced site** at Burnside.

Planning approval is also in place for the provision of **two additional pitches at Acorn Grove Craigavon** should the need be identified in the future.

Following a referral from Occupational Therapy, NIHE has successfully applied for a change of use of the admin block at Acorn Grove to domestic use to meet the needs of one family currently residing on site.

More recently NIHE is engaged in the appointment of a Consultant with a view to engaging in a consultation process to progress phase 2 works at the **Glen site, Coalisland** following completion of individual electric points in phase 1. The intended works will include improving site infrastructure and environmental works.

Currently NIHE Place Shaping Team is carrying out a land identification process in **Newry** to identify suitable land to provide a transit/serviced site which has been identified and included in the NIHE Traveller Accommodation Programme.

For further information about this please contact **connor.smith@nihe.gov.uk**
2. Early Years Support and Educational Attainment

Early Years Support

The Trust’s Public Health Nurse continues to work with Traveller families in Coalisland, Dungannon and Craigavon.

Deirdre McKillen can be contacted by:
- Telephone: 028 8772 2821
- Mobile: 07770828750
- Email: Deirdre.mckillen@southerntrust.hscni.net

The Trust’s Child Development Intervention Coordinator continues to liaise with the Traveller Support Groups so that parents can get information about all the family support programmes and know where to go to for help and advice.

Martina McCooey can be contacted by:
- Telephone: 028 3756 4462
- Mobile: 07795450278
- Email: Martina.mccooey@southerntrust.hscni.net

Roots of Empathy (ROE)

The Trust coordinates the Roots of Empathy programme in primary schools to help children develop awareness of their own feelings, reduce levels of aggression, raise social and emotional competence leading to increased empathy. The 27 classroom programme centres on a Mum and a baby who is aged between two and four months at the beginning of the programme and the pupils watch, listen, celebrate, relate and learn as “their” baby grows and develops. Maureen McSorley, Key Point Person worked in partnership with the Traveller Support Groups and identified schools that would benefit from the programme. Three Traveller Support Workers were trained in 2014/15 to deliver and nurture the programme in six schools with Traveller children. Five of these schools have now trained school based Instructors and have made the programme part of the school curriculum. In 2016 the Trust also trained the Specialist Health Visitor to start the programme in Primate Dixon. Within the Southern Trust area the Roots of Empathy Programme is currently being delivered in 26 schools including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>St Catherines, Armagh</th>
<th>Primate Dixon, Coalisland</th>
<th>Tullygally Primary School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St Peters, Bessbrook</td>
<td>Christian Brothers, Armagh</td>
<td>St. Josephs, Meigh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A total of 16 Traveller children have taken part in the programme in 2016/17

Seven additional schools will join the programme this year and for further information, please contact; Maureen McSorley ROE - Key Point Person Telephone: 028 3756 4489
- Email: Maureen.mcsorley@southerntrust.hscni.net
2. Early Years Support and Educational Attainment

Early Years Support continued

Early Years

Toybox, funded by The Department of Education is an outreach home visiting early childhood programme aimed at improving long-term outcomes for Traveller children (0-4yrs) and their families through a play based service.

The programme recently published a child development book entitled “All about me” Before I am Born To Three Months. This book supports all parents on their journey from pregnancy through their baby’s first three months of development, offering practical tips and hints. This visual book has been developed with the support of Traveller parents and focusses on giving all parents, through photographs, illustrations and words, the tools they need to create a rich learning environment to help their baby grow. The books month-by-month format guides parents through baby’s thinking, feeling, physical, talking and listening skills and links their learning to brain development. Parent self-care ideas are included to promote positive growth for parent and baby.

For further information on Toybox in Southern Trust area please contact: Shirley Gillespie shirleyg@early-years.org Mobile: 07968 874414

Educational Attainment

Traveller Education Support Service (TESS)

The Traveller Education Support Service (TESS) delivery plan 2016-17 has identified some key outcome targets which are particularly relevant for Traveller children.

These include:-

♦ Improve educational outcomes for Traveller children and young people
♦ Reduce educational inequalities; and
♦ Help ensure that Travellers who face barriers or are at risk of social exclusion are supported to achieve their full potential

TESS aims to help parents, children, schools and other stakeholders deliver improved educational outcomes.

In its delivery plan for 2016-17 a number of agreed outcomes are included to guide this process including:-

♦ Improve educational outcomes for Traveller children and young people through improved attendance at school
♦ Traveller families help to overcome ‘hard’ barriers to their children’s participation in education
♦ Traveller families and schools help to overcome ‘soft’ barriers to their children’s participation in education

TESS is using the outcomes based model for its 2016 -17 delivery plan and this will help inform ongoing and future education provision.

For further information please contact: Paula.SmythHutchinson@eani.org.uk Mobile: 07825 141576 Telephone: 028 3831 7053
3. **Employment and Skills**

*Craigavon Traveller Support Committee* has had its most successful year to date in terms of volunteering.

Volunteers include:-

- **2 service users** volunteer in the Women’s Group. They prepare the hospitality and room and are responsible for the completion of monitoring and evaluation forms, so staff can step away from that process. These women volunteer **1.5 hours per week** on an on-going basis.

- **6 young people** from local 6th years have volunteered at the Afterschools and on average they each have contributed **2 hours per week** for the past **25 weeks**.

- **2 young women** have just begun to volunteer with the Young Women’s Group and are currently going through the induction process.

- **1 man** from the wider community circle is volunteering with the Young Men’s Group.

- CTSC has recorded **673 project volunteer hours during the 2016/17 financial year**, in addition to the hours completed by our voluntary Committee. The majority of these hours relate to After school’s provision.

- Volunteers have supported all aspects of the organisation, working across the projects, ranging from children and young people’s programmes to delivering a men’s health project.

- We have **4 project volunteers** from the Traveller community and another **7 from the wider community circle**.

*An Tearmann*

- **1 young Traveller** was supported by An Tearmann during her work placement at the homework club. She then successfully enrolled in ‘level 2 ‘childcare and has renewed her volunteering at the Afterschool.

- **2 girls** both aged 16 have successfully completed a four-day beauty course. One of these girls is now in full time employment.

*Armagh Traveller Support Group*

- **2 Travellers** are now fully supported and trained to deliver cultural awareness training with support staff on different programmes.

- Supporting **6 Traveller young people** in securing their places in Construction and Hair and Beauty at Southern Regional College (SRC).
3. **Employment and Skills continued**

*Community Health Champion Programme*

During 2016/17, the Trust’s Health Training Coordinator provided support and mentoring to the Travellers trained as Community Health Champions (CHC) during 2015/16.

Of the 16 Travellers trained, 7 Community Health Champions continue to actively engage promoting home accident prevention, health lifestyle and healthy choices to family and wider circle of friends in addition to undertaking further training in their particular area of interest. One Community Health Champion married during the summer months and is no longer in a position to engage. Another has moved out of the Southern Trust area.

Ongoing support was provided in terms of sourcing additional training courses, employment and volunteer opportunities.

- 3 CHCs secured employment - 2 in a healthcare setting and 1 in private sector
- 1 CHC is volunteering in Loane House, Dungannon on a weekly basis and is registered as a SHSCT volunteer - in addition to her HSC employment
- 1 CHC has just completed the Community Health Training programme in 2016 and another has just completed the Community Health Training Programme in 2017
- A further CHC has applied to become a co-facilitator on the AWARE Traveller Mental Health Programme

The Department of Employment and Learning continue to receive the minutes of our meetings and will attend meetings on request.

Although they do not provide specific programmes for Travellers, information on all their programmes is available at: https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/ or/and https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/

Please note:- the functions and services previously delivered by the ‘Department of Employment and Learning’ have been transferred to the ‘Department for Communities’ and ‘Department for the Economy.’
3. Employment and Skills continued

Community Health Trainer Programme

Kathleen Toland from Lurgan completed the Health Trainer qualification in February 2016 and has continued to receive support and mentoring from the Health Training Coordinator throughout the year. Kathleen has completed additional ‘wraparound’ training including:

Food values, Safetalk, Choose to Lose Facilitator training

During 2016/17 Kathleen has provided:

1:1 Health checks (6), Health clinics (15), Health Promotion Programmes (including 3 Walking programmes, in Lurgan and Craigavon) and a Choose to Lose programme in Mount Zion House

An article on Traveller Health Trainer was submitted to the ‘Stronger Together’ network E publication.

Ciara O’Hanlon resigned as Health Training Coordinator in December 2016 to take up a new position as Equality Manager within the Southern Trust. We would like to thank Ciara for all her work over the past two years and wish her every success in her new post.

Geraldine Donnelly has been appointed as the new Health Training Coordinator and took up the position in April 2017.

Geraldine can be contacted by:-

Telephone: 028 3756 4474 Mobile: 07920 796621
Email: geraldine.donnelly@southerntrust.hscni.net
4. Reducing Stigma

Traveller Cultural Awareness

The Traveller Cultural Awareness Workshop ‘Understanding and Respecting Difference’ has been designed to increase awareness of the issues faced by Travellers on a day-to-day basis. The programme is designed to be engaging and interactive, where the facilitators encourage discussion and aim to challenge commonly held stereotypes, discriminatory beliefs and prejudicial attitudes.

During 2016/17 one Cultural Awareness training session was delivered to Aware NI regional staff.

For further information, or to book a workshop, please contact:
Lisa Hogg or Roisin Brady at Telephone: 028 3834 2089
Email: manager@craigavontravellers.org

Discovering Diversity E learning

To ensure cultural awareness and understanding, improved access to Trust services and reduced experience of discrimination by Travellers accessing services the Trust continues to provide Diversity E learning modules for Trust staff. From April 16 to March 17, 86 staff undertook the Discovering Diversity E-learning programme. Of these staff 56 staff completed all six modules and 57 completed the cultural diversity module.

The original Discovering Diversity programme was designed to ensure that HSC staff are equipped to deal with difference in a positive way. The first 4 modules take the learner through a journey that explores how to approach difference and conflict in an effective and fair way.

The 5th module focuses on disability issues and the 6th module on cultural diversity. The programme can be accessed as follows:-

Within the Trust: http://diversity.hscni.net
Outside the Trust: http://www.diversity.hscni.net

Note: please use the same access each time you log in to this programme.

Registration & Completion

To access the programme click on link above, which will take you to the login page. If it is your first visit you will need to follow a simple registration process, which will only take a few minutes - click on orange button ‘Click here to register.’ Then input a few details and create a password. You will be issued with a username which you will use, along with your password, to login.
Enhanced Care of Travellers

The Directorate of Integrated Care (DoIC) in the South Office of the Health and Social Care Board currently provides a service called ‘Enhanced Care of Travellers’ (LES).

Enhanced services (ES) require an enhanced level of provision above what is required under core General Medical Services (GMS) contracts and in regard to Travellers, this is to accommodate the health and social care needs of nomadic Travellers.

During 2015/16 the DoIC carried out a review of the South LES - Enhanced Care of Travellers. Questionnaires were distributed to all GP practices to gauge the extent of the Traveller Community currently residing within the catchment area in terms of overall need for GMS services.

GP practices were asked:-

♦ Are you currently signed up to the South LES?
♦ If yes, how many members of the Traveller Community are registered with your Practice?
♦ If no, would you like to commence the South LES and how many Travellers do you anticipate being involved?
♦ Please provide any additional information you may feel relevant

The outcome of this review identified that:-

♦ 2 GP Practices in both Brownlow and Dungannon, 1 in both Coalisland and Keady, and 3 in the Newry area (Meigh, Newry and Newtownhamilton) are already signed up
♦ 1 GP Practice in both Coalisland and Portadown are interested in signing up
♦ In both Lurgan and Ballygawley the respective GP Practices are not signed up nor interested in signing up, however they have Travellers registered within the Practice.

On an annual basis, GP Practices signed up to the South LES are asked to complete a return providing the following information:-

♦ Number of Travellers registered at 31st March
♦ Additional mechanisms the practice has in place to enable Travellers to access services
♦ Other HSC services used by Travellers
♦ Any Feedback Travellers may have provided to the Practice

For further information, please contact:-
Jeanette Donnelly, Assistance Business Support Manager, Directorate of Integrated Care - Southern Office Telephone 028 9563 3204 Email: jeanette.donnelly@hscni.net
6. **Targeted programmes**

**Mental Health and Suicide Prevention**

**Gatekeeper training** continues to be promoted with the Traveller Support Groups across the Southern Trust area.

**Cultural Competence training** continues to be rolled out across Mental Health Services in the Trust and 12 staff attended during 2016/17.

**AWARE training programmes** funded by PHA

Traveller Support Workers and the Health Training Coordinator attended AWARE training - Mood Matters for Adults and Living Life to the Full and Encouraged and supported Travellers to attend AWARE programmes locally.

Both programmes use concepts from the Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Model (CBT) and introduced participants to the ‘Five Areas Approach’ which they could use to challenge and change unhelpful thinking and behaviour in order for them to make a positive difference to their lives.

**Craigavon Traveller Support Committee CTSC**

- A four week Mood Matters programme was delivered during April 2016. **Five women** participated to some degree. **One woman** requested follow up support.
- CTSC also delivered a Health and wellbeing programme and the Verve Health trainers delivered ‘Food Values’ and a ‘Gimme 5’ mental health session as part of the overall programme.

**Armagh Traveller Support Group**

- Two workshops were completed by Aware NI for the :-
  - women’s group - **6 women** attended
  - young women’s group - **3 young women** attended

ATSG (in partnership with Aware NI) is consulting with Travellers living in Keady with regards to facilitating mental health programmes in this area. The programmes are due to take place mid-May.

**An Tearmann**

- Two sessions of Living Your Life To The Full (YLTTF) delivered in December 2016
- Ongoing promotion of AWARE and the benefits that it can bring from engaging with the programme. We also have promoted facilitation on a one to one basis however while there is an interest people have been reluctant to commit to attending.
6. **Targeted programmes continued**

**Home Accident Prevention**

Throughout the year a range of information and resources have been provided to the Traveller Support groups and others who work with Travellers including:

- **100 flyers** ‘Finger food without the fear’  

**Picture booklets** (12 of each title) and can be downloaded [here](http://www.capt.org.uk/shop/booklets)

- I’m only a baby but.....
- Now I can crawl I can.....
- Now I’m a toddler I can.....
- As I grow and change.....

**Safety aids** including: [http://www.capt.org.uk/shop/Burns-scalds-prevention-products](http://www.capt.org.uk/shop/Burns-scalds-prevention-products)

- 80 hair straightener pouches and 4 x education packs to the support workers to raise awareness of these accidents
- 10 x carbon monoxide alarms to An Tearmann
- 20 x cupboard locks to Traveller Health Champion Dungannon
- 10 x cupboard locks at the Traveller event in Moylinn in December
- 15 x cupboard locks to NM Traveller Family Support Worker
- 5 x furniture straps (tip over accidents)
- 15 x door jammers and 25 flyers to Traveller Health Champion Dungannon (on finger entrapment)
- 10 x door jammers at the Traveller event in Moylinn in December

In addition **one Traveller lady** completed the One Day Training Course ‘Child Safety in the Home’ provided by Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) Rospa on the 15th November and obtained the City & Guilds Level 2 qualification.

**For further information please contact:**  
**Nina Daly**, Accident Prevention Officer  
**Telephone:** 028 3831 1524 (Direct line)  
**Email:** nina.daly@southerntrust.hscni.net
The Trust continues to roll out its new Community Information System and encourage staff to record ethnicity.

8. Collaboration and Joint Working

The Regional Traveller Health and Wellbeing Forum led by the Public Health Agency (PHA) continues to bring together representation from the PHA, HSCB, Health and Social Care Trusts, Education Authority, Traveller support and relevant voluntary sector organisations.

The aim of the Travellers Health and Wellbeing Forum is to improve the health and wellbeing of Travellers through developing better coordination, sharing models of best practice and shaping future services. Members are committed to undertake actions based on the findings and recommendations of the All Ireland Travellers Health Study, and in particular those, relating to health and wellbeing.

A yearly thematic action plan is approved and supported by the Forum and it allows a means of planning, delivery and accounting for actions to be undertaken by the members. The Forum meets four times a year to report on progress on agreed interventions and to agree new priorities.

Some of the forum’s activities and achievements during 2016/17 include:-

- Continued commissioning of Traveller Health posts in Belfast, Western and Southern area
- Additional financial support for Traveller groups in the Southern area to sustain and expand services
- Continued commissioning of the Traveller Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing programme (regional)
- Undertook a Breast Screening Cancer Screening Pilot in Belfast
- Toybox HighScope regional training programme for Traveller families

If you would like to find out more about the Traveller Health and Wellbeing Forum

Contact: Lucille Lennon Lucille.lennon@hscni.net Telephone: 028 95363542
Future Plans

The Traveller Action Group will continue to meet on a quarterly basis.

A new action plan is currently being developed for 2017/18 in line with the regional Traveller Health and Wellbeing Action Plan.

The Traveller Action Group Action Plan will focus on the following areas:

1) Collaboration and Joint Working
2) Early Years Support and Educational Attainment
3) Employment & Skills
4) Traveller Friendly Services & Reducing Stigma
5) Targeted Programmes
6) Monitoring, Evaluation and Research

We will continue to seek to:

- Expand membership
- Promote awareness about Traveller culture
- Provide up-dates to ensure Traveller Support Workers and Travellers are aware of Trust and other services, referral pathways and the range of programmes to improve the health and social well-being of Travellers
- Develop mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the uptake of services by Travellers
- Involve Travellers in planning, evaluation and development of improved services
- Support Traveller development
- Embed and further develop the Health Champion and Health Trainer programme
- Promote the creation of employment and volunteer opportunities for Travellers within the Trust and partner organisations

We will also be participating in the Regional Traveller Health and Wellbeing Forum workshop in June 2017 to review work undertaken to date to support Travellers and further workshops over the summer months to agree new priorities and an outcome based accountability framework for 2018/19.
Traveller Support Contact details

**An Tearmann Traveller Support Group**
Community Support Centre
64 Main Street
Coalisland
Co. Tyrone
BT71 4NB

*Offices open to individual Traveller enquiries for both drop-in and appointments from Monday to Friday 9.00 -5.00pm.*

**Telephone:** 028 8774 1961  
**Community Worker:** Una Loughran

**Armagh Traveller Support Group**
Ward 1, St Luke’s Hospital
71 Loughgall Road
Armagh
BT61 7NQ

*Offices are open Monday to Thursday. Appointments are available Monday - Thursday from 10.00 -1pm*

**Telephone:** 028 3756 4560  
**Project Manager:** Fidelma McCoy  
**Admin Support:** Margaret Montgomery

**Craigavon Traveller Support Group**
Moylinn House
21 Legahory Centre
Craigavon
Co. Armagh
BT65 5BE

*Offices are open Monday to Thursday 9:15 to 5.00pm  
Fridays 9:15 - 2.00pm*

**Telephone:** 028 3834 2809  
**Project Manager:** Lisa Hogg  
**Project Administrator:** Roisin Brady

**Stella McLoughlin**
Traveller Family Support Worker for Newry and Mourne
Promoting Wellbeing Team
John Mitchel Place
Newry
BT34 2BU

**Telephone:** 028 3083 4272  
**Email:** stella.mcloughlin@southerntrust.hscni.net
If you are interested in becoming part of the Trust’s Traveller Action Group, please speak to your local Traveller Support Worker or contact:

CAROLYN AGNEW
Head of User Involvement and Community Development

028 3756 4469
079 2087 5649

Email: Carolyn.agnew@southerntrust.hscni.net